DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 199 777 CS 503 291

AUTHOR Henry, David
TITLE Once More, With Feeling: Reagan and "The Speech" in 1980.
PUB DATE Feb 81
NOTE 16p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Western Speech Communication Association (San Jose, CA, February 14-17, 1981).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Persuasive Discourse; *Political Issues; *Politics; Public Speaking; Rhetoric; Rhetorical Criticism; Speech Communication; *Speeches
IDENTIFIERS Carter (Jimmy); *Political Campaigns; *Reagan (Ronald)

ABSTRACT

Ronald Reagan's rise from political neophyte to Republican candidate for governor of California in 1966 was characterized by a public relations strategy, which was bolstered by "The Speech," a 30-minute anti-big government, defense-of-freedom message. He presented this message appropriately to each audience to identify himself with diverse political factions. To downplay his lack of political experience, Reagan aides manipulated his image to "prove symbolically" that he would be a good administrator. These "speech" tactics were also central to Reagan's 1980 presidential campaign, in which as he deplored the weak national defense and government intervention. His campaign announcement was designed to ally him with moderate and conservative Democrats and independents, as well as moderate Republicans. Reagan also sought to broaden his appeal by taking his campaign into Democratic strongholds, by producing commercials aimed at the working class, by meeting with black leaders, and by contrasting President Jimmy Carter's appeal for austerity by rallying the country's potential with positive ideological language. His meetings with people in international affairs was the "symbolic proof" of his foreign policy leadership essential to his "presidential image." Although his campaign was expertly timed to the disenchanted national mood, credit for his victory is due to "The Speech" rhetorical strategy that convinced the voters he was capable of governing the nation. (HTH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

ED199777

Once More, With Feeling: Reagan and "The Speech" in 1980

David Henry

California Polytechnic State University
San Luis Obispo

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
David Henry

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Western Speech Communication Association Convention
February 15, 1981
San Jose, California

C SS03 291

Once More, With Feeling: Reagan and "The Speech" in 1980

David Henry

Kurt Ritter described Ronald Reagan's rise from political neophyte to Republican candidate for Governor in 1966 as an exercise in public relations politics.[1] The exercise's success stemmed largely from his advisers' strategy to portray Reagan as a candidate acceptable to diverse political factions, and to manipulate "his reputation to present the 'reasonable picture of a candidate'."[2] Essential to the strategy was "The Speech," a 30 minute anti-big government, pro-American message fashioned by Reagan during his years as a General Electric "evangelist and circuit rider."[3] Reagan and "The Speech" were on the road a great deal in the late 1950's and early 1960's, warning the country of the increasing Soviet menace and the attendant threat to free enterprise and capitalism. Eventually, an "evil expansion of big government" theme would share equal billing with "encroaching" communism and our declining military defense as co-stars of "The Speech."

Indeed, the "defense of freedom" and rejection of government by a "distant elite" themes dominated Reagan's message when he first surfaced as a political figure in 1964.[4] His national television appearance on behalf of Barry Goldwater's candidacy elicited a more positive response than did any other single event of the Republican's presidential campaign. The performance also won the attention and eventual backing of a group of prominent businessmen who urged Reagan to consider running for Governor in 1966.

Before making an official announcement of his candidacy, though, Reagan tested his chances by embarking on a "pre-campaign" campaign tour. According to Ritter, it was during this tour that Reagan's advisers adopted a twofold strategy to demonstrate their (non-)candidate's qualifications. First, they intended to identify Reagan with diverse political factions. Depending on his audience, Reagan couched the basic message in language appropriate for moderate Republicans, committed conservatives, academics, and even Democrats and liberals.[5] The strategy's second element required ingenuity. Given Reagan's lack of political experience, something had to be done to make him a plausible candidate for Governor. By manipulating Reagan's image to demonstrate that he was "sensible" and had the "intellectual capacity" to govern, the goal was to "prove symbolically" that he would be a good administrator. Such symbolic

proof included publicizing Reagan's role in the research and preparation of his speeches and emphasizing his use of note cards instead of a script. Moreover, his background as an economics major served as the warrant for accepting as reliable the torrent of statistics with which he imbued each presentation. Buoyed by the success of the trial run, Reagan eventually made his official announcement. And the rest is California history.

It is also American history, for the centrality of "The Speech" in Reagan's 1980 presidential campaign is unquestionable. From its inception as an unannounced campaign through its adaptation of the 1966 tactics to the national level, Reagan's quest for the presidency mirrored the gubernatorial campaign strategy remarkably. Examination of the initial phase of Reagan's presidential bid, the appeals used to reach diverse segments of the electorate, and the techniques employed to illustrate the candidate's "presidential" stature both illumines and supports this thesis.

Although his official announcement for the presidency came in 1979, Reagan's domestic issues adviser, Martin Anderson, observed that the campaign actually began in 1975. According to Anderson, Reagan "never stopped running" after he lost the Republican nomination to Gerald Ford in 1976.[6] Following Ford's subsequent loss to Carter, Reagan aimed to take control of the GOP. In January of 1977, he founded Citizens for the Republic, a political action committee established ostensibly to aid Republican congressional candidates in interim elections.[7] Headed by long-time Reagan associate Lyn Nofziger, however, CFR also obviously provided the foundation for a presidential campaign organization.

Besides the organization's presence, Reagan's own activities indicated he aspired to a role beyond ex-Governor and former presidential candidate. Using his radio broadcasts, newspaper columns, and speaking engagements as forums, he adopted the posture of "loyal oppositionist" very early in the Carter administration. In the first half of 1977, for instance, Reagan assailed the President's proposals for universal voter registration and direct election of the President as "politically motivated," chastised Carter for the manner in which he handled the controversial dismissal of General John Singlaub, and rebuked him for the uneven and inconsistent application of his human rights policy.[8] To carry these and similar issues to an even larger audience, plans were laid for the production and distribution of paid television messages.[9]

Much of what he told his readers and listeners resembled the substance of his General Electric sermons and gubernatorial campaign addresses. For the San Francisco Commonwealth Club, for example, Reagan deplored the weakness of our national defense and pointed to the "fatally flawed" Panama Canal treaties as symptomatic of that weakness. He also treated the supportive audience to some "vintage Reagan" anti-government maxims: "When you get in bed with government," he told them, "you're going to get something more than a good night's sleep."[10] While he clearly retained issues and lines that had served him well in the past, however, he did not intend to rely solely on the past. One new theme which would permeate the 1980 campaign emerged in a closed-circuit television address to Republican leaders in April of 1978. In rejecting Carter's call for austerity and lowered expectations, Reagan offered the Republican Party as an alternative to "no growth and limited opportunity."[11] Putting Americans in control of their own destiny would eventually form an essential element of Reagan's campaign discourse.

In fact, after nearly three years of serving as the loyal oppositionist, criticizing the incumbent, and testing both old and new ideas before wide audiences, Reagan focused on the strength of the people in announcing his candidacy for the presidency. The people, he said, seek "a leader who will unleash their great strength and remove the roadblocks government has put in their way." Wanting to aid a nation that "thunders for a spiritual revival, hungers to once again see honor placed above political expediency, to see government once again the protector of our liberties, not the distributor of gifts and privileges," Reagan began his official campaign on November 13, 1979.[12]

From the outset, the influence of the 1966 gubernatorial campaign strategy was apparent. Recognizing the need to create identification with diverse factions of the electorate, Reagan cast his announcement address in positive terms and, in the opinion of at least one observer, designed it "to appeal to two swing constituencies": moderate to conservative Democrats and independents, and moderate Republicans.[13] Similarly, in his acceptance speech at the Republican convention he identified the GOP as "a party united, with positive programs for solving the nation's problems; a party ready to build a new consensus with all those across the land who share a community of values embodied in these words: family, work, neighborhood, peace and freedom."[14] The convention speech's "cautious and moderate tone,"[15] combined with its "balance

between . . . old conservative verities and (Reagan's) new summons to 'a community of shared values' across party lines," made it "the most important utterance of his public life."[16] Among those groups invited to join in the community of shared values, it is most instructive to observe Reagan's identification tactics vis-a-vis moderate Republicans, traditional Democratic constituencies, and "new" conservatives.

In contrast to the Republicans' divided convention of 1976, when the moderate Gerald Ford edged the conservative Reagan for the nomination,[17] unity was the dominant theme in 1980. In a quest for that unity, Reagan had begun to rally moderates to his cause in 1979. He made contact with some of Ford's supporters, and was determined to demonstrate that he had at least some appeal to the party's "ideological center."[18] In his acceptance speech, he urged the audience to move forward as one: "Together," he intoned, "let us make this a new beginning."[19] Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., impressed by the contrast between Reagan and one of his political mentors, Senator Barry Goldwater, observed that "Reagan set out to unify his party, seeking a tranquil convention and first Ford, then (George) Bush as his running-mate. Where Goldwater was an excluder, Reagan is evidently an includer." Then, in what is a tribute to Reagan's ability to appeal to all factions of the party, Schlesinger concluded: "In his non-tense manner, his non-menacing affability, his readiness to conciliate, he reminds voters less of the Goldwater of 1964 than of the Eisenhower of 1952."[20] Given his constant references to the party's success and the country's prosperity under Eisenhower's leadership, it is difficult to imagine a comparison that would have pleased Reagan more.

Pointing to the accomplishments and statements of the party's leaders was also a stock technique when Reagan sought backing from traditional constituencies of the Democratic Party. He maintained, for example, that Woodrow Wilson, in his inaugural address, "made a comment that applies to both great political parties. 'The success of a party means little,' he said, 'except that when a nation is using the party for large and definite purpose'."[21] Rather than simply asserting that it is the Republican Party which has such a purpose, Reagan relied on testimony from another Democrat to illustrate the Democrats' shortcomings in the past. "When the New Deal was riding high, with a program of social experiments, Reagan noted, "Mr. Democrat himself, Al Smith went on nationwide radio to tell his fellow Americans he could no longer follow the leadership of the party he had served 20 years. He said he

was taking a walk, and he asked the Democrats to look at the record. It is time now for all of us to look at the record."[22] And what will the record show? If we are to believe Franklin Roosevelt, it will show that government "costs too much," that its "unnecessary functions" must be eliminated, and that luxury programs must be forsaken if the government is to "be made solvent."[23] That, at least, is the FDR Reagan chose to celebrate when he accepted the Republican nomination.

In addition to reciting the dicta of party leaders, Reagan sought support by taking his campaign into the midst of Democratic strongholds. He opened his campaign, for instance, at the Neshoba County Fair in Mississippi. Coatless and tieless, he delivered "20 minutes of prime Reagan oratory" to a receptive audience.[24] By choosing to open his campaign in the deep south, Reagan both signaled Carter that the incumbent's home base was not considered sacred, and served notice that he intended to broaden his appeal.[25]

Blue collar workers and union members were key targets. The Republican National Committee produced commercials aimed at "voters under 40 years old who did not have a college degree and earned between $15,000 and $25,000 a year."[26] And in his appearances, Reagan gave working class voters specific reasons for turning to the Republican Party. He maintained, first of all, that the "Carter Depression was created and molded by Carter himself . . . This President," he told the Teamsters, "has demonstrated time and again that he is insensitive to the problems of working people."[27] Reagan, on the other hand, understood. Addressing his audiences as "fellow union members," he invariably recited his experiences as a six-term President of the Screen Actors Guild, leader of the movie industry's first strike, and the "first union president ever to seek the presidency," to prove his sensitivity to workers' problems.[28]

He also claimed to understand the problems faced by black voters. A voting bloc generally conceded to Democrats, Reagan vigorously pursued their support. The audience changed, but the refrain remained the same: Democrats in power say "make do with less," but Republicans in power will make it possible for all Americans to earn more. Telling them to lower their expectations "may be the Democratic leadership's message to minorities," Reagan declared to the Republican convention, "but it won't be our message. Ours, ours will be: We have to move ahead, but we're not going to leave anyone behind."[29] In the pursuit of black votes, Reagan held a well publicized meeting with Jesse Jackson,

visited National Urban League President Vernon Jordan, and delivered a major campaign address to a National Urban League conference in New York, all in a brief period. At each stop, his message was that conservatives could "feel 'sympathy and compassion for the victims of social and economic misfortune' just as much as liberals and that free enterprise and a sound economy have more to offer disadvantaged blacks than government programs."[31] Southern Democrats, union members and blue collar workers, and black voters were not the only traditionally Democratic constituencies to whom Reagan appealed,[32] but it should be evident from his messages to those groups that he was intent on expanding his support beyond typical Republican voting blocs. He was not so intent on this objective, though, as to ignore the first rule of politics: protect your base.

In this instance, that base consisted of conservative Republicans, and in particular the "new" conservatives. Where the "old" conservatism glorified the past and longed to return to it, the "new" conservatism dictates that the future can and must be shaped and molded in light of established principles.[33] The past, to be sure, is important, but the "new" conservative wants not a return to the past, but "a return to the past's way of facing the future."[34] Employing established principles to develop a vision of the future and to shape events according to that vision constitute important phases in the development of an ideology.[35] Given the Republican Party's frequently and emphatically stated aversion to ideological politics, its presence and significance in Reagan's campaign cannot be ignored.[36] That it was present is not only attested to but lauded by George Will, who concluded that the "cultural conservatism in the platform is, to some extent, a noble rarity--a commitment to mold rather than merely conform to the mood of the moment."[37]

Throughout the campaign, Reagan's words helped shape his audience's perception of what the future might hold and what their role could be in forming that future. He implored his audiences, for example, to reject the Democrats' claims that progress must first be preceded by regression. "The American people," he observed, "the most generous people on earth, who created the highest standard of living, are not going to accept the notion that we can only make a better world for others by moving backward ourselves."[38]

Carter's inability to "balance the budget, reduce taxes and restore our defense," led the incumbent to conclude that these objectives cannot be achieved. "But," Reagan told the International Business Council in Chicago,

"I refuse to accept his defeatist and pessimistic view of America. I know we can do these things and I know we will."[39] The success of an economic recovery program, he argued, depends "more than anything else on the will of the people to regain control of their government. It depends on the capacity of the American people for work, their willingness to do the job, their energy and their imagination."[40] Finally, after attesting to his faith in the people, he outlined specific programs which gave the "new" Republican Party the "large and definite purpose" of which Woodrow Wilson spoke in his inaugural address. Notice the positive language and constructive nature of the programs, attributes which address the issue of a neo-conservatism designed to shape events in accordance with an established ideological framework:

> --". . . to restore in its rightful place this society of high principle, of equality for all and special privilege for none . . .
>
> --". . . to care for, shelter, and protect the least protected among us . . .
>
> --". . . to conserve the environment with which we are blessed . . .
>
> --". . . to relieve the small businessman of excessive regulation . . . and to energize the economy by lifting the burden of taxation from working and middle classes . . .
>
> --". . . to look to the genius of industry . . ., management . . ., and labor for solving the energy crisis . . .
>
> --"to begin the moral and military rearmament of the United States for the difficult, dangerous decade ahead . . ."[41]

In tone and substance, Reagan's words contrasted sharply to Carter's. Where Carter "sketched a view that emphasize(d) America's limitations," Reagan sketched "a view that emphasize(d) its potential."[42] He seemed to speak with conviction when he described the American people as "the kind of men and women Tom Paine had in mind when he wrote, during the darkest days of the American Revolution, 'We have it in our power to begin the world over again'."[43] And when Reagan referred to "our power," it is apparent that he meant the multiple audiences with whom he had attempted to identify himself from the campaign's inception: disaffected Democrats, as well as conservatives and moderates within his own party.

For the rhetorical strategy embodied in "The Speech" to succeed, however, identification of the candidate with diverse segments of the electorate is not in itself sufficient. Equally important is providing evidence of an ability to conduct effectively the duties associated with the position sought. In his first campaign for governor, Reagan's lack of experience necessitated the manipulation of the candidate's image to provide "symbolic proof" of his leadership abilities. In 1980, symbolic evidence was again necessary, but it was accompanied by a demonstration of substantive experience as well.

Substantive proof consisted primarily of a recitation of Reagan's achievements as Governor of California. To ascertain the extent of government waste and determine where to make needed cuts in the Federal budget, for example, Reagan pledged to "establish a citizen's task force, as I did in California, to vigorously examine every department and agency. There is no better way to bring about effective government," he told the International Business Council, "than to have its operations scrutinized by citizens dedicated to that principle."[44] He was convinced his economic program, of which controlling government spending was a part, would work, "because they did work in a state that is a microcosm of our nation."[45] In spite of California's substantial economy and its socio-political composition, which does indeed constitute a microcosm of the nation, Reagan's credentials were hardly overwhelming. Even so ardent a conservative as James J. Kilpatrick, apparently fearful of another nationally inexperienced president, was dubious initially. Maintaining that Carter "suffered keenly . . . because of his woeful ignorance of how things work in the capital," Kilpatrick contended that it would "not escape public notice that Reagan shares the same handicap." Of Reagan's political experience he concluded, "This is thin stuff."[46] Kilpatrick's initial skepticism eventually subsided, but others continued to doubt Reagan's suitability. Consequently, additional evidence of his leadership potential became necessary.

In the absence of sufficient "hard" evidence, symbolic proof once again became Reagan's stock-in-trade. To create a "presidential" image for their candidate, Reagan's advisers sought to belie concerns about his inexperience in foreign policy and to contrast Reagan's leadership image with Carter's. They were convinced that the success of their efforts would depend largely on how well Reagan exploited his mass media appearances.

Reagan's total lack of foreign policy experience was of considerable concern both to political analysts and to the general public. To counter such

apprehensions, his aides sought, first of all, to surround him with people of "stature and experience" in international affairs. Thus, Reagan's staff publicized heavily his meetings with Henry Kissinger, Alexander Haig, and others conversant in international issues.[47] Another tactic consisted of emphasizing Reagan's extensive foreign travels following the 1976 elections. He realized early that foreign policy would be cited as one of his weaknesses as a potential president, so by 1978 he had traveled to the Far East, Iran, and Europe.[48] He used such trips to solicit foreign opinion on current issues, but as one long-time Reagan observer noted, he also used them wisely "to polish his image as a prospective presidential candidate."[49]

Emphasizing contrasts between Reagan and Carter constituted another dimension of the image-building strategy. Peter Dailey, a key media strategist in the Reagan campaign, explained that the goal of Reagan's commercials in the general election was to "portray the GOP candidate as a forceful figure," in order to distinguish Reagan from "the widely held view of Jimmy Carter as an indecisive president."[50] In his personal appearances, Reagan followed a similar approach. Summarizing Carter's advocacy of the Panama Canal treaties as an action taken simply out of fear of being disliked by other nations, for example, Reagan declared that, "It's time to tell the President: We don't care if they like us or not. We intend to be respected throughout the world."[51]

Finally, the success of the Reagan staff's strategy, they felt, hinged on the candidate's ability to project the desired image in his uncontrolled media appearances.[52] One staff member characterized the candidate's impending acceptance speech at the convention, for instance, as "our biggest chance to catch the attention of the American people. We want to show them the real Ronald Reagan--a warm, decent, reasonable man."[53] As might be expected, the campaign staff had little reason to worry about the quality of Reagan's performance. The typically reserved columnist, David Broder, was favorably impressed. Reagan's acceptance speech, he said, "was masterful--a well-conceived, well-written, well-delivered restatement of his familiar conservative themes, couched in language that was inclusive, not parochial, and phrased in a tone that was clearly presidential."[54] In a similar vein, Broder later provided an evaluation in advance of the Reagan-Carter debate of the strengths and weaknesses of each participant. Giving a decided advantage to the challenger, Broder noted that in "all the important, non-verbal areas of the contest for public confidence, Reagan has the advantage." Because of his physical presence

and his control, Reagan had "never been bested" in a televised encounter involving other candidates. And of the debate with Jimmy Carter Broder concluded, if Reagan "looks presidential, he likely will be President."[55] He did, and he is.

Reagan's campaign was not without its difficulties. His rhetorical blunders[56] and penchant for misinterpreting or mis-stating statistics[57] caused considerable alarm at times, and even led some campaign analysts to note late in the contest that while Carter wasn't likely to win the election, Reagan might be able to lose it.[58] The campaign's success in spite of such difficulties may be attributable, at least in part, to the timing of the election.[59] Senator Paul Laxalt, long a Reagan supporter, endorsed timing's role in making Reagan a credible candidate. "Not since General Eisenhower's first election almost 30 years ago," said Laxalt in 1979, "has there been such a perfect 'fit' between the man and the public mood as there is today with Governor Reagan and the American people."[60] In addition to timing, though, credit is due the rhetorical strategy adopted in the campaign.[61] Reagan appealed to diverse constituencies in the electorate, and he convinced the voters that he had the ability to govern the nation. In short, "The Speech" worked. Again.

Notes

[1]Kurt W. Ritter, "Ronald Reagan and 'The Speech': The Rhetoric of Public Relations Politics," Western Speech, XXXII (Winter 1968), 50-58.

[2]Ritter, 54.

[3]Richard Bergholz, "Reagan Declares He's Not Moving Toward Center," Los Angeles Times, Sept. 30, 1979, part I, p. 18. (Hereafter, references to the Los Angeles Times will be cited as LAT.)

[4]Joseph Lewis, What Makes Reagan Run? (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), pp. 1-3. Also, see Ritter, 50-51.

[5]Ritter, 54-55.

[6]"Ronald Reagan Up Close," Newsweek, July 21, 1980, p. 49.

[7]Richard Bergholz, "Side Street Office--Reagan's 1980 Launching Pad?" LAT, Jan. 28, 1977, part I, pp. 3 and 30.

[8]For separate analyses of each of these issues, see: Kenneth Reich, "Carter Proposals Could Kill GOP, Reagan Says," LAT, April 16, 1977, part I, p. 18; Richard Bergholz, "Reagan Hits Carter's Handling of General," LAT, May 23, 1977, part I, p. 4; and Ronald Reagan, "Human Rights and the Soviet Challenge," LAT, June 23, 1977, part II, p. 7

[9]Richard Bergholz, "Reagan Planning Paid TV Series," LAT, April 26, 1977, part I, pp. 3 and 25.

[10]Reported by William Endicott, "Reagan Still Has Crowds with Him," LAT, Jan. 19, 1978, part I, p. 19.

[11]Richard Bergholz, "GOP Parades Its Leaders in 14 Cities," LAT, April 7, 1978, part I, p. 3.

[12]Richard Bergholz, "Reagan Enters Race, Lashes Out at U.S. 'Leaders'," LAT, Nov. 14, 1979, part I, p. 1.

[13]Alan Baron, "Ronald Reagan Trumpets His Traditional Verities in a New Key," LAT, Nov. 18, 1979, part V, p. 1.

[14]Ronald Reagan, "Acceptance Address," Vital Speeches of the Day, XLVI (Nov. 15, 1980), 642.

[15]William Schneider, "Detroit: Buoyant Send-Off for Reagan-Bush," LAT, July 20, 1980, part VII, p. 2.

[16]"Reagan's 'Crusade' Begins," Newsweek, July 28, 1980, p. 15.

[17]In spite of his advantage as an incumbent, President Ford's margin over Reagan was a miniscule 117 delegates. The often acrimonious debate throughout the convention made it difficult for the GOP to form a united front for the general election campaign against Jimmy Carter. See: Jules Witcover, Marathon: The Pursuit of the Presidency, 1972-1976. (New York: Viking Press, 1977), part VIII.

[18]Richard Bergholz, "Reagan to Form Campaign Unit," LAT, Feb. 6, 1979, part I, p. 18.

[19]"Acceptance Address," 643.

[20]Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., "On the Eve of the Convention," The Wall Street Journal, August 7, 1980, p. 18. (Hereafter, references to The Wall Street Journal will be cited as TWSJ.)

[21]Ronald Reagan, "The Basic Speech," The New York Times, Feb. 29, 1980, p. B4.

[22]"The Basic Speech."

[23]"Acceptance Address," 646.

[24]William Endicott, "Reagan Opens Campaign at a Dixie County Fair," LAT, Aug. 4, 1980, part I, pp. 1 and 6.

[25]James M. Perry," Reagan Aiming to Split the Solid South," TWSJ, Sept. 26, 1980, p. 29. Also, see William Endicott, "Reagan Learns from '64, Acts to Broaden His Appeal," LAT, Aug. 7, 1980, part I, p. 1.

[26]David Treadwell and Lee May, "Republicans Continue TV Ads Aimed at Democrats," LAT, Aug. 27, 1980, part I, p. 8.

[27]Quoted by Richard Bergholz, "Reagan Says Carter Has Created a 'Severe Depression'," LAT, Aug. 28, 1980, part I, p. 11.

[28]Bergholz, "Reagan Says Carter Has Created a 'Severe Depression'."

[29]"Acceptance Address," 645.

[30]For separate descriptions of each event, see: Endicott, "Reagan Learns from '64, Acts to Broaden Appeal," p. 7; William Endicott, "Reagan Pays Call on Jordan in Hospital," LAT, Aug. 5, 1980, part I, p. 12; and William Endicott, "Reagan Tells Urban Plans, Meets Hostile Poor in Bronx," LAT, Aug. 6, 1980, part I, p. 7.

[31]Endicott, "Reagan Learns from '64 . . .," p. 7.

[32]Jewish Voters and Supporters of equal rights for women were two other groups Reagan courted, sometimes awkwardly. See: Larry Stammer and Eleanor Randolph, "Reagan Vows to Put Woman on High Court," LAT, Oct. 15, 1980, part I, pp. 1 and 7, and James M. Perry and Albert R. Hunt, "Negative Accent: Carter Plans to Win by Depicting Reagan as Shallow, Dangerous," TWSJ, Aug. 14, 1980, p. 11.

[33]Irving Kristol, "The New Republican Party," TWSJ, July 17, 1980, p. 22.

[34]George Will, "With Reagan, No Return to the Past," LAT, Nov. 6, 1980, part II, p. 6.

[35]For a succinct discussion of rhetoric's role in the formulation and application of ideologies, see: Kurt W. Ritter and James R. Andrews, The American Ideology: Reflections of the Revolution in American Rhetoric. (Falls Church, Va: Speech Communication Association, 1978), especially pp. 1-29.

[36]Irving Kristol argues that Republicans have dismissed ideology as being the province of "liberal" politics. Contemporary developments, however, have necessitated reconsideration of that position. See: "The New Republican Party."

[37]George Will, "GOP: A Platform to Shape, Not Seduce," LAT, July 17, 1980, part II, p. 7.

[38]"Acceptance Address," 642.

[39]Ronald Reagan, "Let's Get America Working Again," Vital Speeches of the Day, XLVI (Oct. 1, 1980), 739.

[40]"Let's Get America Working Again," 740.

[41]"The Basic Speech."

[42]Editorial, "Where There's Smoke," TWSJ, July 30, 1980, p. 20.

[43]"Acceptance Address," 646.

[44]"Let's Get America Working Again," 739.

[45]Quoted in "Reagan's Economic Program," San Francisco Chronicle, Sept. 10, 1980, p. 18.

[46]James J. Kilpatrick, "Reagan: Just Another White House Amateur," LAT, Oct. 8, 1979, part II, p. 9.

[47]James M. Perry and Albert R. Hunt, "Reagan Plan is to Make Carter the Issue," TWSJ, July 14, 1980, p. 8.

[48]Richard Bergholz, "For Reagan, 'The Speech' Says It All," LAT, Oct. 21, 1978, part I, p. 21.

[49]Richard Bergholz, "Reagan Seeks Out Feelings on SALT," LAT, Dec. 3, 1978, part I, pp. 3 and 26.

[50]Albert R. Hunt, "New Reagan TV Spots Appear Designed to Erase Any Right-Wing Radical Tag," TWSJ, Sept. 12, 1980, p. 6.

[51]"The Basic Speech."

[52]By "uncontrolled appearances," I simply mean those instances in which Reagan's performance would be "spontaneous." The convention acceptance speech and the presidential debates were "uncontrolled appearances," commercials produced by the Reagan campaign staff were not.

[53]Perry and Hunt, "Reagan Plan is to Make Carter the Issue."

[54]David Broder, "Ronald Reagan, Meet Joe Clark," LAT, July 23, 1980, part II, p. 7.

[55]David Broder, "The Power of Looking Presidential," LAT, Oct. 27, 1980, part II, p. 9.

[56]Counted as "rhetorical blunders" were the controversies generated by Reagan's pronouncements on trees as a cause of air pollution, Darwinism and evolution, the pervasive influence of the Ku Klux Klan in the South, and Vietnam as a "noble cause."

[57]For one examination of Reagan's use and mis-use of statistics, see: Bill Stall and William Endicott, "Record Doesn't Always Support Reagan's Claims," LAT, April 12, 1980, part I, pp. 1 and 24-25.

[58]"Still Reagan's to Lose," The New Republic, Sept. 20, 1980, p. 6. Also, see: Joseph Kraft, "Reagan Mirrors Carter's Irresponsibility on Defense," LAT, Aug. 21, 1980, part II, p. 11.

[59]The importance of timing in political campaigns is excellently stated in Edwin Black, "Electing Time," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 59 (April 1973), 125-129.

[60]Robert Shogan, "Reagan Takes Big Step Toward Race," LAT, March 8, 1979, part I, p. 24.

[61]Implicit throughout this essay is the endorsement of the "revisionist" perspective of political campaign communication. In oversimplified terms, that view holds that "campaign communication matters" to election outcomes. For a less simplified and far more instructive discussion, see: David L. Swanson, "Political Communication: A Revisionist View Emerges," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 64 (April 1978), 211 -222.